

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the courtesy of a telephonic interview on April 4, 2006 between Examiner Carlos Lugo and Applicants' Attorney Jeffrey Klayman to discuss the final Office action of February 21, 2006.

Applicants' Attorney explained some very clear differences between the subject door locking mechanism and the teachings of Mena and Backus. Specifically, in the subject door locking mechanism, door locking occurs when the door and the assembly are forced away from one another, which is counterintuitive since this force is in the direction of opening the door rather than closing the door. In Mena, the door and the assembly are forced toward one another in the course of the locking process. In Backus, there is no real relative force between the door and the assembly under any circumstance described in the patent; rather, a spring is used to cause the hook 10 to engage with the shoulder 16. Applicants' Attorney also explained that Mena does not have "undercut features" within the context of the subject patent application, but rather includes protrusions that abut one another when the door is in a closed position. The Examiner expressed that these elements were distinctions of the subject door locking mechanism over Mena and Backus.

The Examiner and Applicants' Attorney discussed possible wording for claim amendments, specifically to clarify attributes of the force produced by the movable member. Initially, Applicants' Attorney proposed a clarification that the movable member forces the door and the assembly away from one another so as to maintain the engagement of the first and second undercut features. The Examiner indicated that such wording would be sufficient to distinguish over Backus, but expressed some concern with regard to Mena because, technically,

the inflatable bladder of Mena does force the door and the assembly away from one another, albeit within the plane of the door and the assembly. Applicants' Attorney explained that, in the subject application, the door is forced toward an open direction, with the engaged undercut features preventing opening of the door and the force operating to maintain engagement of the undercut features or otherwise prevent relative movement of the engaged undercut features.

Applicants' Attorney suggested amending the claims to that effect, and the Examiner indicated that such clarification would be sufficient to distinguish over Mena and Backus. Because no final claim wording was discussed, however, no agreement as to allowance of the independent claims was reached.

2. Claims 1, 4-12, 18-21, 23-26, 30-34, 39, 40, and 44-47 are pending. Claims 1, 21, 34, and 47 are being amended. No claims are being canceled, and no new claims are being added. Thus, claims 1, 4-12, 18-21, 23-26, 30-34, 39, 40, and 44-47 remain pending.

3. The Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, 7-12, 18, 21, 23-26, 30, 31, 34, 39, 40, 44, and 47 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Mena; rejected claims 1, 4, 9, 10, 18, 21, 24, 30, 31, 34, and 39 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Backus; and rejected claims 5 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Backus.

Applicants are amending claims 1, 21, 24, and 47 to clarify that an opening force is applied on the door relative to the assembly, with the engaged undercut features preventing the door from opening when the opening force is applied, and the force operating to maintain engagement of the undercut features or otherwise preventing relative movement of the undercut features in order to

keep the door latched. As discussed above, neither Mena nor Backus teach or otherwise suggest a door locking mechanism that applies an opening force to the door. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended are patentable over Mena and Backus.

4. All pending claims are believed to be in a form suitable for allowance. Therefore, the application is believed to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicant respectfully requests early allowance of the application. The Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned, Jeffrey T. Klayman, if it will assist further examination of this application.

5. The applicants do not believe any extension of time is required for timely consideration of this response. In the event that an extension has been overlooked, this conditional petition of extension is hereby submitted, and Applicants request that deposit account number 19-4972 be charged for any fees that may be required for the timely consideration of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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